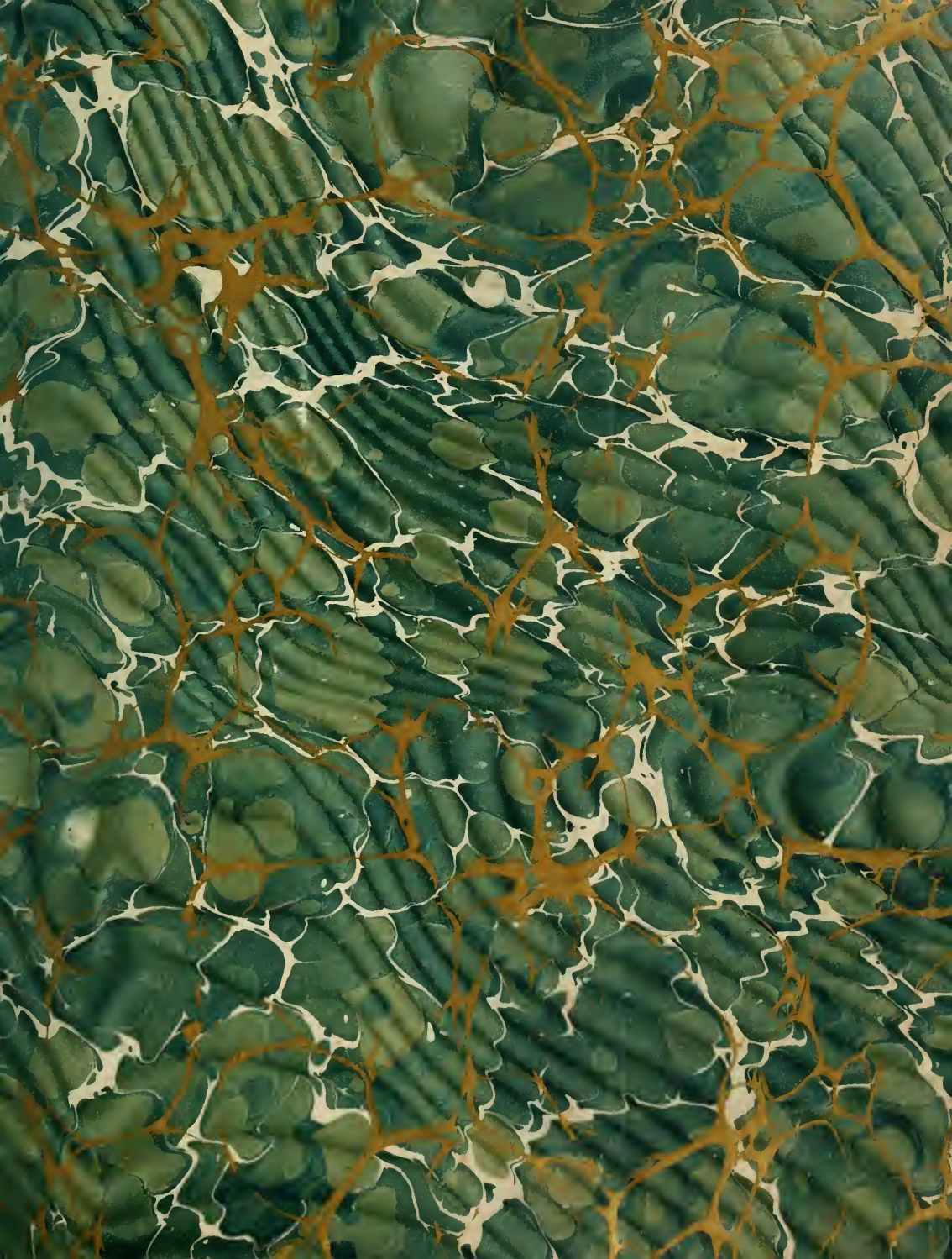


Guy Leaves.





THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES





Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

<http://www.archive.org/details/ivyleaves00grid>

27
To my dear friend
My wife, my children

Dear

1891

IVY LEAVES

WELCOME, READERS, GOOD AND BAD.
IN THESE PAGES YOU MAY FIND
LOVING THOUGHTS TO SOOTHE THE MIND,
LONGINGS, HOPES, WE ALL HAVE HAD.
IF THEIR WORTH BE AUGHT OR NOUGHT,
PLEASURE TO ONE HEART THEY BROUGHT.

Ivy Leaves

BY

C. O. G.

COLLECTED

M D C C C X C

(Printed for Private Circulation)

7P
+ 728
51462

CONTENTS

	PAGE
IVY LEAVES	1
THE MORN	3
WIMBLEDON COMMON : 6.30 A.M.	5
A FRIENDSHIP	7
THE SONG OF THE GRASS	9
THE HAREBELL	10
THE SEED OF GRASS.	11
IN THE FOREST	14
A BIRD'S SONG	16
TO THE PRIMROSE.	18
THE BOY AND THE BIRD	19
THE LARK	20
FANCY'S ECHOES	23
THE NEW-MOWN HAY	27
A SPARROW'S SONG	29
LITTLE BIRD, SAY	31

861819

	PAGE
AN INFANT'S GRAVE	33
'AND WITH NO LANGUAGE BUT A CRY'	35
A SACRIFICE	36
THE LEAF AND THE BROOK	39
THE SEA-GULL'S SONG	44
A MESSAGE	47
TO A LARK SINGING IN OCTOBER	48
SPRING TIME	50
A THOUGHT; HADLEY WOOD	52
TO A PAINTED WILD-ROSE	54
AUTUMN LEAVES	55
TO A CAGED LARK	57
SONNET	59
FROZEN TO DEATH	60
PRIDE	63
DEATH	65
THE NEW LIFE	66
TO ADA, AFTER HER ILLNESS	67
OLD AND NEW YEAR	69
TO OUR FATHER	71
TO OUR MOTHER	72
A REVERIE	73
ON A PORTRAIT OF MISS —	75

Contents

vii

	PAGE
MANHATTAN BEACH	76
A ROMANCE IN REAL LIFE	78
THE LOOKING-GLASS	85
IN MEMORY OF E. W. SEARING	86
EPITAPH ON PALK, THE 'WEIGHER'	87
SLEEP.	88
TO W. C. P., ON HIS MARRIAGE	92
'WHAT WENT YE OUT FOR TO SEE?'	96
A LAMENT	99
'TO ALL WHO LOVE THE LIGHT, THE LIGHT HAS COME'	101
SONNET OCCASIONED BY A PASSAGE IN A LETTER FROM EMERSON TO CARLYLE	102
MIDDAY REST	103

Ivy Leaves

THE leaves of spring soon fade and die
When autumn winds blow fierce and strong ;
The world rolls on with smile and sigh,
And time is fleeting fast along.

What boots it that we vainly strive
To hold the joys of summer time ?
They pass, though seed and fruit survive,
Undying tokens of their prime.

My little life and work must end
Like leaves that autumn sweeps away ;
But these best thoughts of mine I send
Into the world—and this I pray :

Let them not perish in the blast
That withers words of tongue and pen ;
Like IVY LEAVES may they hold fast,
Green, fresh, and pure,—beloved of men.

THE MORN

THERE'S nought that I love like the morn, early morn,
When the dawn's first faint streaks through the night-
 clouds have torn,
When the light gently breaks as the new day is born ;—
Yes—the hour that is sweetest is morn, early morn.

They may boast of the joys that fair women bestow
 With their soft silken hands and their kisses so sweet ;
They may vaunt the delights of the wine's ruddy glow,
 But with dawn's blushing charms there are none to
 compete.

Other joys may suffice for the sluggard and fool
 Who waste half their lives at their board or in bed ;
For me, I will follow the Mussulman's rule,
 And at rise of the sun bend in worship my head.

Reawaked are the twittering birds on the trees,
And they sing to the flowers newly waken'd from sleep
By the rustle of leaves in the freshening breeze,
When the angels of morn o'er the universe sweep.

'Tis morn that brings thoughts that are pure as the dew,
That opens our hearts to what Nature can teach,
To our spirits lethargic gives courage anew ;
And to man's little mind God appears within reach.

There's nought that I love like the morn, early morn,
When the dawn's crimson streaks through the night-
clouds have torn,
And the light gently breaks as the new day is born ;
Yes, the hour I love most is the morn—early morn.

WIMBLEDON COMMON

6.30 A.M.

AH ! little robin, so gay and so free,
Whom I watch as you hop from the green bough
there,
And peck in the grass for your breakfast, I see ;
Kind Nature supplies you with bountiful fare.

But Poverty's dens in the city hard by
Are crowded with pallid-faced little ones dear,
Who wake at morn with a hungry sigh,
And but live to starve, without food or cheer.

Fate ! cruel Fate ! thus you order our ways :
But your laws must be wrong, so it seems to me ;
O for the dear old fairy-book fays,
And those poor little children gay robins should be !

Silence, my Muse ! you must hold your peace ;

 The earth has plenty and somewhat to spare ;

And if selfishness, sin, and vice were to cease,

 The starved little children would all have their share.

A FRIENDSHIP

ONE morn a sparrow settled upon my window-sill
And chirp'd to me a greeting, as the sun rose o'er the
hill ;
He look'd to right, he look'd to left, with timid glance
and shy :
But loving friends we soon became, that little bird and I.

What was it caused our friendship, that join'd our
hearts like one ?
—He loved the fields, he loved the flowers, the hill-tops,
and the sun ;
He loved to sit in quiet nooks and watch the streamlet
flow ;
He loved to hide behind the hedge and hear the west-
wind blow.

Sometimes to town he flutter'd, amidst the smoke and
din,
And heard from little London birds sad tales of want
and sin ;
But yet he loved in narrow streets the children's play to
see,
Spite of their faces grimed with dirt and pinch'd with
poverty.

'Twas oft his wont with outspread wings, thro' aery space
to fly,
Above the fields, above the town, regarding from on high.
One song was his, and only one, but he felt its burden
true ;
That he was small, the world was small, and God was
great, he knew.

We hold no speech together ; he has no voice to tell
Of all he sees and hears each day ; but yet I know full
well,
By thoughts that pass between us, all that he fain would
say,
Could he hold converse with me just in this simple way.

THE SONG OF THE GRASS

A BLADE of grass am I,
That look towards the sky ;
My strength I gain in sun and rain,
And feel no danger nigh.

Some men for power cry,
For knowledge others sigh ;
But guess who can the Maker's plan,
However hard he try.

I ask no questions why,
In Nature's law ne'er pry.
I live ; I grow ; and feel I know
Enough to satisfy.

And some day, by-and-by,
Like all things low and high
That God has made, I too shall fade
And wither up and die.

THE HAREBELL

THE clash of music loud and strong,
Of festal march or joyous song,
Makes heart's blood beat with spirit new
To noble thoughts and actions true.
But yet I love that gentler strain,
A harmony with soft refrain,
Like angel's whisper in our ear,
'A still small voice,' yet faintly clear.
In fields where flowers bedeck the ground,
Where may and hyacinth abound,
Where roses blush their lives away,
And woodbine blossoms day by day ;—
Midst all this wealth of perfume rare
The slender-shafted harebell there
Above its tangled grassy bed
Hangs down its tender fairy head.

Both music's tone and flower denote
In Nature's song the same sweet note.

THE SEED OF GRASS

A LITTLE seed of grass was blown about
 The busiest thoroughfare of London town,
 And Nature sent the rain and sunshine down
 To make its heart long for the world without.

At last, by chance, as near a wall it lay,
 Half-hidden in a little dusty heap,
 Its soul was stirr'd ; it waked as if from sleep,
 And then a tender stalk saw light of day.

Fair Goddess of the fields, teach us to know
 Why in the city's gloom this seed should grow ?

'Though here, alone amidst an angry strife,
 But short the existence it can hope to lead,
 'Though small appear its worth or use indeed,
 Yet full of purpose is its tender life.'

Cheer'd by the sunshine, moisten'd by the dew,
This little spear of grass, with hope and pride,
The base surroundings of its life defied,
And, spite the smoky atmosphere, it grew.

Ten thousand toilers pass'd, with hasty tread,
Close to that dusty heap beside the wall,
Intent on their own business, each and all :
Except just *one*, who chanced to turn his head

And smile that in the city he should find
That slender shaft of green, which to his mind

Brought happy memories of the country side,
The trees, the birds, the music of the rill,
The tinkle of the sheep-bell on the hill,
The sight of meadows stretching far and wide.

Even as a star that comes within our sight,
Emerging from a sudden rift of cloud,
Whilst all around the storm-fiend cries aloud
And shakes the earth with terror in the night :

The Seed of Grass

13

Even so, methinks, so bright and yet so brief,
 This blade of grass its life ephemeral led ;
 Amidst the noise and dirt a light it shed,
Till Death in kindness brought it sweet relief.

And now the life of this small seed is done,
What honour in the great world hath it won ?

Of Nature's plan it was a tiny part,
 A sunbeam of the sun that ever shines,
An angel's smile that cheer'd a human heart,
 The source and inspiration of these lines.

IN THE FOREST

WHERE the bracken springs up quickest,
There am I.

Where the leafy boughs are thickest,
There am I.

Where the birds are ever flying,
And the whispering zephyrs sighing,
There am I—there am I.

Where the limpid streamlet bubbles,
There am I.

With a song that lulls our troubles,
There am I.

Where fair Nature reigns in quiet,
Far from city noise and riot,
There am I—there am I.

Where no evil thoughts can enter,

There am I.

Safe away from every tempter,

There am I.

Keep me pure, O God, I pray thee,

Through my life, or let me lay me

Down and die—down and die.

A BIRD'S SONG

As I fly,
The yellow primrose bids you pluck,
The little lambkin kneels to suck :
New life is born, for Spring is nigh,
As I fly—as I fly.

As I fly,
The roses bloom, the passions glow,
And man and maiden whisper low :
' Ah ! love is sweet,' they say, and sigh,
As I fly—as I fly.

As I fly,
The reapers reap the golden grain,
And homeward creaks the loaded wain ;
The sun sinks red in the western sky,
As I fly—as I fly.

A Bird's Song

17

As I fly,
The biting north-wind sweeps the earth ;
All Nature shrinks and waits new birth :
To live again we all must die.

So say I—as I fly.

TO THE PRIMROSE

SWEET tender flower of Spring—
Whose perfume seems to cling
Unto my sense like sound
Of music—once more round
Thy fresh and pregnant root
The little blossoms shoot
Upward towards the sun,
And opening one by one,
Send their souls' breath above,
Incense of praise and love.

THE BOY AND THE BIRD

'One of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.'

A BOY held fast a timid fluttering bird,
 Caught unawares: I begg'd him let it go,
 Or give it me: to both he answer'd, No.
 'Well, *sell* it, then?' was next my cautious word.

Whereon, the price agreed, I took with glee
 The trembling bird into my tender care,
 But fail'd to find the slender promised fee
 To pay his captor ransom then and there.

To give too much were wrong, so now in doubt—
 Not to encourage greed nor seem unfair—
 I handed back the prisoner to his fate.
 Not long in hesitation did I wait:

The bird got free: I check'd my joyous shout,
 Awed by the sudden thought sublimely grand—
 'What Power relax'd the muscles of that hand?'

THE LARK

I

AH! happy lark, had I thy wings to fly
Above the earth and all its turmoil drear,—
Where passions rage, and hope gives way to fear,
Where tenderest hearts are first to break and die,—
Had I thy wings, sweet bird, o'er meadows green
I'd watch the daisies and the violets grow,
And midst the clouds, by human eyes unseen,
Would mock at all the struggling crowd below.
My soul would be at rest, and once again
Rejoice in consciousness of power and worth,
Scorning the sins and shadows of the earth,
The bitter seeds that grow to mortal pain.
*—A pleasant dream! yet better here to stay
And labour out our lives from day to day.*

II

AH! happy lark, had I thy skill to sing,
Unbosoming my soul in wildest glee,
And pouring out my life in harmony
That o'er the world in joyousness should ring,
Then would I live content through sunny days,
Whilst earthly claims no longer could annoy;
The world should see me not, yet hear my lays,
And every heart should welcome them with joy.
The scent of may, wild hyacinth and rose,
Would still be mine, to make my heart rejoice,
And be distill'd to music in my voice
For listening souls that should forget their woes.
*—A pleasant dream! yet better here remain
And labour bravely, even though in vain.*

III

AH! happy lark, even when thy life has flown,
I envy thee thy solitary grave.
To some sequester'd dell or leafy cave,
Far from the haunts of men,—some place unknown—
My task all finish'd, thither would I creep,
'Midst autumn leaves to watch the setting sun,
And when the night should close, then fall asleep,
To dream of rest and peace by labour won.
Nought should disturb me from that slumber sweet,
No tears of grief should e'er be shed for me;
Though, like thine own, my simple song might be
Dear to some pair of lovers on a seat.
*—A pleasant dream! but better we withstood,
And died to advance the noble and the good.*

FANCY'S ECHOES

I

WHEN leaves are freshest and the scent of spring
Clings to the woods, 't is passing sweet to rest
And hear the fledgling robins in their nest
Begin to twitter ere they learn to sing.
While she who brought them forth sits fond beside,
Maternal pleasure not unmix'd with pride.
A kindred scene as sweet my eyes have view'd
To which it bears a near similitude.
A babe that to its mother's breast lies close
And wakes to wonder what its life can be,
But finding food and warmth just smiles a wee,
Then coos itself again to soft repose.
Howe'er the voice of birds or babe you name,
Those voices echo through my heart the same.

II

ROAMING the fields one balmy day in June
I heard the skylark, poised in heavenliest blue ;
Far off at first, close and more close it drew,
As, bounding to the earth, its joyous tune
Like rippling water sounded, flowing clear
Down the hillside, with dripping fern-leaves near.
Before the sound died off, two happy boys
Rush'd by me heedless, and I heard the noise
Of merry laughter echo down the hill
In accents loud at first, then faintlier heard :
'Tis there ! 'tis there ! and now at last 'tis still.
What is the fancy linking boys and bird ?
Their voices are alike—I scarce can tell
If mine be all man's heart, or bird's as well.

III

THE summer-time is full : the woodlands show
Their deepest shade, with spreading boughs o'er-
grown ;
There warbles still the nightingale alone
Her love-lay to the twilight, soft and low.
Secure from sight she sits, the leaves among,
Unconscious of the maid who hears her song :—
' Ah ! cease, fond bird, ah ! cease thy plaintive cry,
My heart, like thine, is full with many a sigh.
Hast thou a lover too, whose kisses sweet
Upon thy lips have seal'd thee his for aye ?
When will he come again my heart to greet
With loving words and promise of his stay ?'
The woods are still, and bird and maid at rest,
The same sad longing aches in either breast.

IV

' FIERCE blows the winter wind ; and not less chill
Nor bitter is the sense to have lived in vain,
To have squander'd time that cannot come again,
To have lost our youth's bright hopes and steadfast
will.'

So mused and moan'd a wealthy man whose wide
Acres were fenced and wall'd on every side.
But slimy worms are fattening there below ;
On yonder leafless tree sits perch'd a crow,
Black-feather'd and morose, like any mute,
Who cannot speak, but utters now and then,
Echoing the mournful thoughts of man and brute,
With croaking caw, his dolorous 'amen.'
And hurrying from your presence, man and bird,
The moans and croaks seem one that I have heard.

THE NEW-MOWN HAY

Oh ! sing of the new-mown hay !
Now the reapers reap all day,
 And the sun shines out,
 And the children shout :—
‘ O joy for the new-mown hay ! ’

Oh ! look at the new-mown hay,
With the boys and girls there at play ;
 They dance and they run,
 They are mad with their fun,
With joy for the new-mown hay.

As the scent of the new-mown hay
Is wafted across your way,
 How it clears the mind,
 Leaves all thought behind
But joy for the new-mown hay.

The New-mown Hay

They scatter the new-mown hay,
These maidens and youths, alway ;
 And their bright eyes meet
 With a smile as sweet
And pure as the new-mown hay.

As they carry the new-mown hay
The sun sinks westward away ;
 And the cuckoo calls
 Till the evening falls
All still as the new-mown hay.

Then joy for the new-mown hay !
In death there is life, they say.
 Cease to weep or sigh ;
 We but live to die :
Sing joy for the new-mown hay !

A SPARROW'S SONG

I SANG 'midst forest leaves one day,
Too-wee-it.
And watch'd the trembling shadows play,
Too-wee-it.
With pensive look and downcast eye
A rueful man walk'd slowly by.
Too-wee-it, too-wee-it.

He thought none else could be in view,
Too-wee-it.
For slowly from his breast he drew,
Too-wee-it.
A small white paper wrapt with care
That held a lock of lady's hair.
Too-wee-it, too-wee-it.

A Sparrow's Song

The sun casts shade where'er we go,

Too-wee-it.

Together rose and nightshade grow,

Too-wee-it.

Love may be false as well as true ;

It may bring joy, and sorrow too.

Too-wee-it, too-wee-it.

His lips were to that token press'd,

Too-wee-it.

And by his face his thoughts I guess'd,

Too-wee-it.

' Though parted by a stern decree,

Our love shall true and constant be.'

Too-wee-it, too-wee-it.

They say that man is noble, great,

Too-wee-it.

And therefore sorrow seems his fate,

Too-wee-it.

I envy not his life, I vow,

More joy I find on yonder bough.

Too-wee-it, too-wee-it.

LITTLE BIRD, SAY

WHY in the spring do we rejoice
When leaves shoot and the lark's sweet voice
Rings from the sunny sky all day?

Little bird, say—little bird, say.

What sets our hearts with love aglow,
Or makes us weep at others' woe,
Or promptly Pity's call obey?

Little bird, say—little bird, say.

Why do we tremble at their roar
When breakers lash the ocean's shore,
And lightnings dart like fiends at play?

Little bird, say—little bird, say.

Little Bird, Say

How is it we can fancy well
The difference betwixt heaven and hell
In drunkards' rage and children's play?

Little bird, say—little bird, say.

Meeting we smile, at parting sigh,
In joy we are born, 'midst sorrow die.
Why is it so? come, tell me, pray.

Little bird, say—little bird, say.

THE BIRD'S ANSWER

What can a little birdie know
Of things that puzzle wise men so?
Would you learn from me, some truth we see
In life, wherever we go.

We feel it surely must be true
Whate'er experience brings to view
Is some small part of the world's great heart
That lives and throbs all through.

Leaves of a giant spreading tree,
Waves of a mighty endless sea,
Each swells the whole of the mystic soul
That works through Eternity.

AN INFANT'S GRAVE

TELL me, sweet floweret, come tell me true
Why in this sorrowful spot you grew?
How came you to spring in so sad a place?
Some dainty garden your beauty should grace.
Was it for sin that your bloom was shed
In repentance among the graves of the dead?
Was it in love that you here were placed
Far from temptation and thoughts unchaste?
Sadly your blossom looks up to the sky:
What is the reason? come, tell me why?

A soft breeze stirr'd that little blue-bell,
And out of its heart a dewdrop fell.

'Listen, O mortal, to what I say:
Repeat to the children my story, I pray.

First pledge of the love betwixt husband and wife,
A sweet little babe was given to life ;
'Twas the year's glad springtide, when all was gay ;
And words of thanksgiving were utter'd that day.
But, alas ! for fond hopes, ere a month had pass'd,
'The dear little infant had breathed its last ;
And with many a sigh and many a tear
They buried the tiny sweet angel here.
So I grew up—and the reason why
Is to teach little children they soon may die.'

I mused for a moment ; then, half in play,
I pluck'd the flower and I walk'd away.

'AND WITH NO LANGUAGE BUT A CRY'

CLEAR shone the stars, the night was still,
As homeward walking o'er the hill
And through the fields, where fast asleep
The lambs lay warm against the sheep,
I stopp'd to gaze upon the sky
And watch the stars, until a sigh
Broke from my heart,—a silent prayer
Acknowledging a Power there,
Above my little life. Around
All Nature slept: there came no sound
Throughout the stillness of the night.
But as I wonder'd at the sight,
A lamb cried out in plaintive tone
A sigh to heaven so like my own,
My hidden thought, that found no word,
In that poor bleating cry was heard.

A SACRIFICE

ONE day I wander'd o'er the hills alone,
So weary was my soul, and I had grown
So tired of all the unrest of the town.

The quiet sheep were browsing up and down,
I saw through sunny air the blithe birds fly,
And from the height I watch'd the arc of sky
Dip down and join the sea. The summer breeze
Just bent the grass, through which the humming bees
Pursued their busy way. With pure delight
My heart was full. So peaceful was the sight,
I could but think of one sweet loving face,
One voice that haunts me still in every place,
One heart that clings to mine, my dearest one,
My guiding star, until my life be done.

So, as I walk'd, I gather'd, here and there,
Sweet honeysuckle with its fragrance rare,
Heedless of hands scratch'd in the thorny hedge;
Each bloom I gather'd was a separate pledge

And earnest of my love: 'such blossoms live
For those whose hearts beat true, that they may give
Some token to the loved one.' So I thought,
As with the scented bunch I gladly sought,
All weary as I was, my homeward way,
Which through a quiet little village lay
Nestled amongst the trees, so modest, shy,
It hid itself from careless passers-by ;
Like some sweet hedgerow bloom that often grows
Alone, beneath a bank where no one knows.
A quaint old rustic church stood on a mound,
With cottages that cluster'd all around,
In which dull folk a tame existence led,
And in the churchyard lay when they were dead.

The crimson sun was sinking in the west
As in the wooden porch I sat to rest
And watch the twilight grow. Ah ! sweetest time
Of all the day, which fosters thoughts sublime,
And brings the welcome boon, so oft denied,
A glimpse of our weak nature's better side.

What thoughts were mine, it boots not here to tell ;
Intent on these I sat until the bell,
Calling to vespers, roused me to the sense
The time for rest had pass'd, and I must hence ;

Unless I hasten'd back, the evening shade
Would turn to darkness and my flowers would fade.
But ere I started on my road, some whim
Moved me to enter, and behold the dim
Interior of the church. With gentle touch
The oaken door fell back ; and I was much
Abash'd and awed, as in the aisle I stood
And felt that in God's presence there I could
Bow down and pray, but that I did not know
What words to utter all my thoughts to show.
But wishing still to leave some token there
Of reverence and of thanks, in silent prayer,
Upon the altar quietly I laid
My bunch of bloom ; an offering only made
By robbing from my love her flowery prize
And giving it to God for sacrifice.
O'er all the church an incense sweet was shed,
Whilst I, with thoughtful face and quiet tread,
Stepp'd back once more into the country lane,
To make my way across the hills again.
The sun had set : in heaven the moon was high ;
And stars came peeping from the darkening sky.

Studland.

THE LEAF AND THE BROOK

PRELUDE

FAR distant from the busy haunts of man,
From greed and sorrow, lust and fell disease,
Through grassy meadow-fields a brooklet ran
Whose banks were shelter'd by o'ershadowing trees.

The tender leaves were born and quickly grew,
Nurtured with gentle rain and summer sun ;
From bough to bough the feather'd songsters flew,
At each song's close a fresh song was begun.

And joyfully the brooklet babbled on
With never-ending music through the fields,
Of rest impatient, anxious to be gone
And learn the secret lore the future yields.

Yet in this paradise I heard with pain
The voice of doubt and pining discontent ;
My listening spirit caught the sad refrain,
And here in simple rhymes is what it meant.

THE LEAF (*speaks*)

Just a little leaf am I,
Hanging on the tree,
Growing here I know not why :
What is life to me ?

Every day the sun goes round
And the clouds roll by ;
But my life is fix'd and bound
Till I drop and die.

Streamlet, streamlet, whilst you flow,
Ah ! what joy for you ;
Every minute, as you go,
Seeing something new.

The Leaf and the Brook

41

Here I hang disconsolate,
Bitter is my cry ;
Cursèd, cursèd is my fate :
Life is but a lie.

THE BROOK (*speaks*)

DOWNWARD, downward, who knows whither ?

Threatening banks on either hand,
Shall I grow to be a river,
Or be swallow'd up in sand ?

Summer suns my moisture killing,
Lapping all my life away,
Frost and snow in winter chilling :
Such my life from day to day.

Happy leaf, above me growing,
Viewing all the country wide ;
Nought I see in all my flowing
Save dull banks on either side.

The Leaf and the Brook

Fruitless is my toil and weary
Do I grow of constant strife ;
Longing soon to end this dreary,
Useless and uncertain life.

A MAN (*speaks*)

SWEET are the fields to a weary one,
Him who is sad ;
Sweet are the songs of birds in the sun,
Making him glad.

Sweet is the sound of the leaves to hear,
Rustling above ;
Sweet is the voice of the brooklet clear,—
Sweeter than love.

All that we suffer, however unkind,
Nature will cure,
Healing the sick in body and mind,
Making them pure.

The Leaf and the Brook 43

Such is the song of a thankful man,
Nature, to thee ;
Yielding what grateful worship he can,
Bending the knee.

THE EPILOGUE

BUT nothing of all this the great world knew.
The streamlet babbled on, the leaflet grew,
The merry birds still caroll'd out their glee,
And all went joyously and peacefully.
At length the tiny leaf, all sere and brown,
Into the streamlet's course fell fluttering down.
And if you would its further history know,
The streamlet bore it on its downward flow,
Till life and life were mingled. On they pass'd,
And Ocean wide received them both at last.
Rich were the furrow'd fields on either hand,
And great men lived and labour'd on the land ;
Praising the God who made both great and small,
And saw that all was good, and bless'd it all.

THE SEA-GULL'S SONG

O'ER the ripple of waves on a rocky shore
I drowsily fly with the summer breeze.
By the cliffs so steep in the caves I peep,
Where the ledges for nests I am free to explore
At my ease.

And so peaceful and calm is the sea below,
That the bleat of the sheep I can hear on the hill,
And the brown sea-weed on the rocks I heed
As it moves when the tide takes it to and fro
At its will.

On my pinions strong o'er the cliffs I soar,
And plaintively call for the storm to wake ;
For dear to me is an angry sea,
When the dash of the waves makes a clamorous roar
As they break.

For, rage as it may, there is nought can stay
The force of my wings or my spirit set free :
Quiet times may please little birds on trees ;
But I joy in the storms and the wrecks far away
Out at sea.

When the landsmen pray and old mariners frown,
And captains who never knew fear look grave,
I laugh aloud from the thunder-cloud
As the lightnings flash and the ships go down
In the wave.

ENVOY

Ah ! wondrous bird,—and still more wondrous thought !
What makes thy wings so strong, thy breast so
white ?
Why love the storm and rocks with danger fraught ?
When strong men quake, why shriek with strange
delight ?

No answer to these questions can we hear :

But while man's puny mind such thoughts appal,
We know that far above our craven fear,—

Above the storms and wrecks,—one God rules all.

[On listening to a sea-gull's song it appears to have only two notes—the one quite a plaintive soft note, like a cry of pain ; the other almost like a human laugh.]

A MESSAGE

THESE blossoms diffuse their rich perfume around,
As an incense of thanks to their Maker above,
A 'Come-let-us-exult'¹ that His mercies abound,—
The psalm of their life, full of praise and of love.

So I to my dearest, in thankfulness, send
A song of pure joy as a breath from my soul ;
My life's little bloom, from beginning to end,
Is due but to her and her heart's sweet control.

¹ *Venite exultemus.*

TO A LARK SINGING IN OCTOBER

FOND foolish bird, that singest still on high
While yellow autumn leaves are falling fast,
Hast thou forgotten summer-time is past,
And dreary winter days are drawing nigh?

Art thou deceived because the sun shines bright,
And autumn air is crisp and clear like spring?
What joyous thought has made thy heart so light?
A dirge of sorrow rather should'st thou sing.

Indeed, methinks, I catch a sadden'd tone
Marring at times thy joyous minstrelsy,
As if a cloud eclipsed thy perfect glee,
And forced thee to a doubt thou darest not own.

To a Lark Singing in October 49

Sing on, sing on ! pour out thy rapturous song !
Such joy on earth is all too rarely met ;
To soothe our life thy truest note prolong,
And cheer our disappointment and regret.

The spring and summer gone, our time misspent,
Seeking to solve the riddle of our fate,
Now autumn comes and finds us all too late :
To mock us in our anguish art thou sent ?

Nay ! as I listen to the inspiring voice
My heart responds and thrills again with hope ;
Let others waste their lives in thought, and grope
For barren knowledge,—WORK I make my choice !

‘Toil on ; be patient ’ (thus I hear thee say),
‘ And spring-time ceases never : ’—though the chill
Of winter and of death approach our way,
Yet faith and hope shall cheer us onward still.

SPRING TIME

THE daisies' tender lids are closed at last,
The birds are carolling their evening lay ;
Behind the hill the sun is sinking fast,
The solemn night-clouds soon will cancel day.

Down the hillside 'tis time I hasten home,
Between the hedgerows smelling sweet of may
And through the meadows where young lovers roam,
And where the skylark pours his life away.

Another spring with all its hopes is here,
And all the joy of coming summer life ;
While, with regrets but vain, another year
Closes its sins, its weaknesses, its strife.

Howe'er remembrance of the past may fade,
And recollection of the path we trod,
Yet record on the 'iron leaf' is made
As year by year we advance to meet our God.

Egham, May 23, 1885.

A THOUGHT

(HADLEY WOOD)

If alone you e'er have been
As you lay upon the green
At your ease ;
When the sun the leaves peep'd thro',
And you caught a glimpse of blue
Through the trees ;

And you heard the sweet birds sing
To the Sun, their God and King,
Lord of Day !
Came no sad thought then—not one ?
Like a cloud across the sun,
As you lay ?

No sad thought of summers bright
That will give the earth delight
As of old,

When you lie beneath the ground,
Hidden far from sight or sound,
Dead and cold ?

From your soul cast out that load,
And make light the weary road
To be trod.

Let your flesh fail, if it will,
But your soul can nothing kill :
That is God.

TO A PAINTED WILD-ROSE

(ON A STATIONER'S ALMANACK)

SWEET simple flower, even pictured as thou art
And senseless, only drawn to make believe,
Though knowing thee a sham, I fain would leave
A kiss upon thy petals ere we part.

Chill blows the winter wind : no flower lives
That may compare with this poor painted thing
Which brings fresh gladness to my heart and gives
New hope and promise of the coming spring.

He who design'd and pictured thee, perhaps
Unknown to fame and poor,—yet when he dies,
Should I outlive him, there'll be one to prize

His broken palette and his book of scraps ;
And should our souls in heaven's azure meet
Thanks shall be his for this rose-drawing sweet.

AUTUMN LEAVES

As I saunter on the road
And the leaves of autumn fall,
 Fluttering down,
 Sere and brown,
The dead Summer's funeral pall,

Ah ! what many-colour'd thoughts
Chase each other through my brain,—
 Bright and glad,
 Black and sad,
Like a change from sun to rain.

What are we but leaves like these,
Growing on the tree of Time?
 Gay we shoot
 With flower and fruit,
Till we reach our summer prime.

Autumn comes and turns us grave :

Winter time and Death are nigh :

Life must stop :

So we drop

To the ground and fade and die.

TO A CAGED LARK

By a market-place in London, in the thickest of the
throng

Of the men who labour ever, did I hear the tender song
Of a skylark, sweetly singing in a cage beside the wall,
Just above the rush of toilers heeding not her voice at all.
As I listen'd much I wonder'd such a happy heart to find
Midst the dirt and gloom of London, in a cruel cage
confined.

'Canst thou see the blue sky arching, and the glorious
bright sunshine?

Hast thou scent of may and woodbine? is the scent of
wild-rose thine?

What can give thee joy so perfect, make thee, captive
bird, so gay?

Not the singers, but the toilers, find a welcome here
to-day.

Yet I love thee, happy songster, thank thee from a
heart like thine :

May the world not quell thy spirit more than it can con-
quer mine.

Toiling in the murky city is my lot : you ask me why?

'Faith, I know not ; we must labour, one and all, or else
we die.

But at times I share thy nature ; fuller hopes my soul
requires ;

So I sing, as thou dost, uttering all my innermost desires.
Few can raise our tenderest feelings, though so many
press our hands,

And of those that hear my sighing well if one but under-
stands.

But there's nought can still the singing that from earnest
souls is born :

What can crush our hopes and longings for a purer,
brighter morn?

Something in us whispers : " Patience ! Life is but a
prison drear :

Death will loose thy bars, and mounting thou shalt sing
in freedom clear."

SONNET

ALL day with clouds the skies are overcast,
 Whilst wintry winds continually blow ;
 Fair Nature hides her face : deep lies the snow :
Bared are the trees by many a stormy blast.
But when at eventide the sun goes down,
 The western sky glows red : a fiery heat
 Seems in the world's great soul again to beat.
A smile of summer lightens winter's frown
That gives a gladsome earnest of the spring,
When flowers will bloom again and birds will sing.
So when in life thou fall'st on gloomy days,
 And heart to heart seems weary and a-cold,
 Ah ! cease thy doubts ; be satisfied, consoled ;
The love that once beats true is sure always.

FROZEN TO DEATH

THE wintry earth was wrapt in frost and snow,
Through wither'd branches did the chill blasts blow
Each dreary day.
Upon the whiten'd ground (ah ! sad to see !)
A little bird had fallen from the tree,
And dead it lay.

Its tender frame was wasted, and its beak
Seem'd open'd wide, as if it fain would speak
And beg for food.
'Thy life is over, and thy lingering pain ;
Thy feather'd friends will call to thee in vain
Through field and wood.

Mute is the voice we welcomed in the spring ;
Stiff are thy limbs—no more upon the wing
Thou'lt gaily fly.

The summer sun will gladden not thy sight ;
For in the cold, cold earth, forgotten quite,
Thou now must lie.

‘ Yet, ah ! not quite ; for surely even now
Thy fond mate lingers on some lonely bough
And grieves for thee ;
Nor quite forgotten in thy darksome grave
By some who once rejoiced to hear thy stave :
Ungrateful we !

‘ How often hast thou cheer’d us with thy song
On summer evenings as we walk’d along,
With sadness fraught !
Thou gavest us joy ; but we—when winter came—
We left thee here to starve (ah ! cruel shame !)
Without a thought.

‘ So died poor Chatterton of cold neglect,
So with contempt the soul of Keats was wreck’d ;
Nor these alone :
Full many a toiler who has ask’d for bread
The world, with callous harden’d heart, instead
Gave him a stone.

'Yet be consoled ; for, think not, little bird,
Ah ! think not that the songs we often heard
Were sung in vain ;
Thy spirit nevermore from us departs,
The tender voice that sank into our hearts
Will there remain,

'Not without tears I lay thee in thy bed ;
We all are poorer now that thou art dead,
Thy singing done.
In fancy still thy simple songs we hear,
And still our hearts will hold thy memory dear
Till ~~we~~ are gone.'

PRIDE

‘THE topmost leaf on a tall, tall tree,
Above the world, all must bow to me
Save the birds and clouds, save the sun and sky :
I have none for a peer, such a king am I !

‘The first leaf kiss’d by the morning sun,
And when evening comes, and his course is run,
The last he quits as he sinks to rest
In glory of gold and red in the west.

‘The gentlest zephyr that e’er can blow,
That is felt by no one far down below,
Will go to my heart, whilst all envy me,
On the topmost twig of this tall, tall tree.

‘For years upon years has this tall tree grown,
Cold winters have chill’d, summer suns have shone,
Till now, as the fruit of the long, long past,
On the topmost point I am here at last.

‘To me all look up ; but I only look down :
I am lord of them all, and I wear the crown ;
There is pride amongst men, but what can it be
To mine at the top of this tall, tall tree ?’

To rest from his song there came a bird
Who had nought of this boast vainglorious heard ;
He snapt off the leaf and away did he fly,
Then dropt it to earth to fade and to die.

DEATH

I LOOK on a skull : ¹ it grins at me :
I laugh at it back again :
Old scarecrow, Death, I will let you see
I scorn both you and your pain.

Come when you will, you ugly shade,
Tear off my flesh—you may—
Something within quite otherwise made
Will scorch and scare you away.

Terror of cowards and slaves you are,
Holding but fools in thrall ;
The body is but the chain or bar
Of our house—the soul is all.

¹ York Road, Lambeth, at a surgical instrument-maker's.

THE NEW LIFE

SORROW and weeping fill'd the house
Wherein the dead man lay
Whom none on earth again could rouse :
His soul had flown away.

But in the heavens, serene and clear,
What did the angels say
With holy shout, we all shall hear ?
—‘ A child is born to-day.’

TO ADA, AFTER HER ILLNESS

WITH every joy and scarce a sorrow
In youth's abandon'd thoughtless hours,
We gambol on in sun and showers,
Heedless and careless of to-morrow.

But ere the unheeded morrow dawns again
Pale Sickness flings us on a bed of pain,
And leads our minds, thus quieted, away,
Far, far away from the world's frivolous shows,
And bids us glance with awe and deep dismay
Across that darkling stream which silent flows
'Twixt this life and the next ;
There do we stand, perplex'd
As to our future fate, and humbly pray
That health our wasted frame may soon restore
To friends and sunshine and the world once more.
But ah ! if Death should hurry us away !

And when at last pale Sickness disappears

And we arise restored from where we lay,

God grant our vows not vanish with our fears,

But help us keep them till our dying day.

OLD AND NEW YEAR

'Tis Christmas time : the dear Old Year,
All old and gray, is dying fast ;
He lies upon his wintry bier,
His weary life will soon be past.

A youngling, brisk and quick of pace,
Comes bounding over dale and hill ;
Whose lustrous eyes and glowing face
Proclaim new Peace and old Good-will.

Then join, both young and old, with me ;
Say farewell to the dying Year ;
Whate'er our faults and errors be,
Does not a deathbed set them clear ?¹

¹ *De mortuis nil nisi bonum.*

With hope and faith then in the right
We'll hail the infant New Year in,
And cleanse our lives and make them bright
And strive to shield our souls from sin.

TO OUR FATHER

DEAR white-hair'd Father, who with constant care
Hast toil'd for wife and offspring till thy mind
Is now so fix'd in labour as to find
Nor peace, nor rest, nor happiness elsewhere,—
Thy children greet thee,—bow before thy face
In love and honour, looking to thee still
(A father and a friend through good and ill)
For help in all their troubles or disgrace.
Bear up thy brave old heart, let not thine eyes
Be over-dimm'd with grief ; look forward yet
And show thy spirit one that never dies,
Nor yields, unsoothed by hope, to vain regret.
Take comfort in thine age—thy faith hold fast,
That we may see a noble end at last.

TO OUR MOTHER

AH ! Mother, dear, though thou art left alone
Of all thy children scatter'd and dispersed,
Can they forget the tender love that nursed
And cherish'd each of them in times long gone ?
Spared each and all to say these words to thee
With thankful hearts we face the future years :
Though age have brought thee sorrow, let us see
A sweet and patient smile behind thy tears.
Have we been wayward, broken from thy tie,
And shaped our thoughts and lives in our own way ?
We meet our trials too from day to day
And look to thee for love to bear them by.
Still let us share together joy and pain :
The joy is sweet : no sorrow comes in vain.

A REVERIE

As on the lonely heath I roam
 And watch the silver moonbeams play,
 My fancies wander far away
 To my lost childhood's happy home.

The rosy morning of my life
 Has disappear'd, and far around
 Fierce storms of doubt and grief abound
 Which lead me into endless strife.

*Across the moon the clouds are flying fast :
 Though Time be brief, Eternity will last.*

My boyhood's spirit wild has turn'd
 To courage of a manlier kind ;
 And struggling through the dark I find
 A purer light, though hardlier earn'd.

My mother's smile, my father's frown,
Has ceased to guide me or control ;
No strength is given unto my soul
Save what from heaven is sent me down.

*Across the moon the clouds are flying fast :
Though Time be brief, Eternity will last.*

From youth, through manhood, on to age,
Our little lives so quickly flow,
We hardly guess, we cannot know,
The cause for which the strife we wage.

We fight as in a foreign land,
And when we feel our fate is rough
We watch the stars, and say : ' Enough !
Our lives are in our Master's hand.'

*Across the moon the clouds are flying fast :
Though Time be brief, Eternity will last.*

ON A PORTRAIT OF MISS —

THIS picture faithful to the life and sweet
Is hardly mine by right, who have no claim
Save that by accident I heard your name
And caught your smile when once we chanced to meet.
But yet your gentle words and loving deeds,
Borne on the wings of Fame, so far made bold
That I, to keep their record clear, must needs
Crave something of yourself to have and hold.
Now, at each fresh report of your sweet ways,
Your face, so truly limn'd, will bring to me
A closer pleasure, in the sympathy
Of hearts that long for good and noble days,
And through my life your influence will endure
And help to make it better and more pure.

MANHATTAN BEACH

HERE wandering by the sad sea's strand,
From home and loved ones far away,
I watch the foam blown o'er the sand,
The rolling pebbles, and the spray.

The sea-bird's shriek comes on the wind
The roaring breakers shake the shore,
Eager some hapless foe to find
On whom their utmost rage to pour.

Whilst out afar upon the ships,
Brave sailors stand, with eyes so clear
And knitted brows and close-press'd lips,
To meet their fate without a fear.

And yet methinks I hear the cry
 Of wild despair, the piteous moan,
Of some who know that they must die,
 And leave their wives and children lone.

Ye angry waves which fiercely toss,
 Repress awhile your rage and roar,
And bear me on your breast across
 To loved ones and to home once more.

A ROMANCE IN REAL LIFE

IN the dull city, on a garret floor,
Lived an old man, in earth's possessions poor ;
Quite white his hair was, and his eyes were dim ;
All worldly pleasures were as nought to him.
His children scatter'd, and his dear wife gone,
Silent and sad he rested all alone ;
Oft of the past would speak with tearful eye
To tell you that true love can never die ;
Fond memory holds it still in joy or pain,
Knowing beyond 'twill flourish once again.
He had read old books ; had travell'd wide and far ;
Abroad been shipwreck'd, wounded in the war ;
He had loved and lost ; and now that all was past
Waited in peace the call of death at last.

Oft would he take his fiddle from its shelf,
To play again the tunes all to himself
He had heard or learnt in the old bygone days,
Old marches, love-songs, ditties, roundclays,
Till in a dream he fancied that he moved
In scenes of youth with those that once he loved.
Ere rose the sun he earlier rose from bed,
Brew'd his own tea, and cut his crust of bread,
And soon as e'er his frugal meal was done,
Would fling his window up, in rain or sun,
To throw to hungry sparrows, waiting there,
The crumbs he had broken up with loving care.
'Tis said his pets when no one else was near
Fed from his hand or lips, nor thought of fear ;
Answer'd his call, and he for hours would play
On his old fiddle to entice their stay.
Friends he had none ; though often on his walk
By riverside at morn, you saw him talk
With sailors ; pausing to regard the tide
Bear down great ships to countries far and wide :
As his soul drifted calmly to that sea
Where Time flows onward to Eternity.

A thrush's song, heard on a winter's day,
Brightens our hearts and chases gloom away ;
Through dungeon-bars a transitory gleam
Of sunshine that into his cell may beam,
Gives to a prisoner hope and joyous thought
Of liberty regain'd : such joy was brought
To the sad heart of the old lonely man,
Giving him fresh life as love only can.

In the same dwelling, in a room below,
There lived a widow and her child ; and so
As fellow-lodgers oft it chanced they met :
The child, a fair-hair'd girl, became his pet ;
Pleased when she visited his cheerless room,
Her voice and footstep chasing all his gloom,
Even as the great black clouds of pitchy night
Are changed to red and gold in morning's light.
Just in her teens, with frank and innocent glee,
Each morn with gentle tap she came to see
What help he needed in his room, and when
Her work was done, he would reward her then
And play some favourite tune, to pass the time,
Or beg her stay to hear a fairy rhyme

Or thrilling sea-tale, how in storm and roar
Of waves, he shipwreck'd on a distant shore.
Thus 'twixt the old man and the maiden rose
A feeling tenderer than mere friendship knows ;
The girl's heart open'd with delight, and found
The sunshine of affection all around,
Giving her such new joy as a bloom in spring
Feels in the sun when first the sweet birds sing,
And bursts in flower, unconscious of its worth,
Beauty and perfume that enrich the earth.
So the sad heart of the old man was cheer'd
Again with joy that long had disappear'd.
As when in autumn time, the roses past,
We think all gone, we have pluck'd the very last,
Yet, by good hap, if we another find
Love it the more for bringing to our mind
The joy we had when in the summer sun
We gather'd myriads where there rests but one.

Thus the days glided, and the young girl grew,
And loved the old man and loved his sparrows too :
To him she came for counsel, and would tell
Her hopes, her secrets ; for she knew right well

His heart was true as heart of man can be,
And rich with boundless wealth of sympathy.

Alas for joys that are but earthly born,
If we o'erprize them, we are doom'd to mourn.
And so it chanced that, as the years roll'd on,
The maid was courted and her heart was won.
A worthy youth besought her as his wife,
And gave new promise to her future life.
The girl came blushing to the old man's side
To whisper the glad news with glowing pride,
And boast of plans for happy days to come,
With him as cherish'd inmate of their home.
But the old man sadly smiled and kiss'd her cheek,
Stroked her soft hair, but not a word could speak,
So full his tender heart ; as well he knew
To show his pain would make her sorrow too.
He check'd his tears, although his heart was sad,
And with his blessing strove to make her glad.
Yet, brooding o'er it as he sat alone,
And felt his life's last little light was gone,
'Twas more than his o'erburden'd heart could bear,
And like a child he sobb'd in his despair.

But full of her new joy the maiden took
Small notice of the melancholy look
That deepen'd on him as the day drew on
When she and her betroth'd should be made one.
But the tunes chosen had a sadder air,
He fed his sparrows with a tenderer care ;
Though now upon his wonted morning walk
He stay'd no more to listen or to talk.
To her alone he spoke, to her would grant
With smile or kiss her every little want,
Till soon the day dawn'd when the old man heard,
With breaking heart, pronounced the solemn word
That bound the lovers fast as man and wife ;
Though robbing him of all most dear in life.

The marriage-bells rang with a merry tone,
As tattling neighbours, who for years had known
The old man and the maiden, whispering, said :
' 'Twas best for all now that the maid was wed.'
And, best or worst, let whoso will decide ;
For ere a month the weary old man died.

Once in each week, through all the year, they say,

A woman, seen by children at their play,
Brings to his grave a basketful of bread
To feed the sparrows in the boughs o'erhead ;
They know her footstep well, and gather round
To pick the crumbs she strews upon the ground,
Singing a tune at times in sad soft strain
As on her homeward way she walks again.

THE LOOKING-GLASS

(A GIFT)

I AM sent as a spy from a lover to see
What virtue or vice may be mirror'd in me ;
So be careful, fair lady, you never disgrace
My crystalline clearness by showing your face
Distorted by anger or redden'd with strife.
Let the sunshine of youth and the beauty of life
Illumine those features, that form debonair ;
Such looks to reflect was my mission, I swear.

EDMOND WILLIAM SEARING

(DIED NOVEMBER 30, 1887, AGED 38)

A NOBLE toiler early finds his rest :

Amidst his work poor SEARING heard the call :
His ardent spirit is number'd with the blest.

Yet, with full hearts and eyes whence hot tears fall.
What can we say to assuage our grief and pain ?

Deep though our sorrow, words are fruitless now,
Nor can our anguish win him back again :

The will of God is done, and we must bow.
Although no soldier, bartering life for food,

Nor priest nor prophet, vow'd to loftiest work,
Yet his be honour, his be high renown ;

For 'midst his own hard toil he did not shirk
To labour ceaselessly for others' good : ¹

Our conscience crowns him with the hero's crown.

¹ As Secretary to the Borough Hop Trade Mutual Aid Friendly Society.

EPITAPH ON PALK

AN honest 'weigher' lies beneath this sod,
'Stripp'd for examination' by his God.

[The duty of a weigher of hops is to strip the cloth from the
bale, which enables him to thoroughly examine the goods.]

SLEEP

1

THE evening deepens, and with tenderest care
 The mother lifts her infant to her breast
 To suckle and to soothe it off to rest
 With gentle kisses on its silken hair.
 The tiny lips press close, her bosom heaves
 With joy and pride that mothers only know :
 She feels each gentle pressure she receives
 And murmurs out her love-song, soft and low :—
 ‘ Now close thy weary eyes, my babe, and sleep :
 Dream, if thou canst, how dear thou art to me,
 Whilst I will pray that angels watch by thee
 And every danger from thy presence keep.’
Sleep on, sleep on : sweet is our rest at night :
And sweet to waken in the morning light.

II

ANOTHER kiss upon thy lips, dear heart ;
 Then we must sleep : not that our love is less,
 Nor that we wish no longer to caress
 And careless of each other lie apart.
 Our hearts still burn with love unsatisfied ;
 The touch of hands still thrills ; our spirit tries
 In vain to conquer sleep and cast aside
 The drowsiness that closes down our eyes.
 'Tis useless, love : so lay thy tired head
 Upon my breast and say 'good-night' again ;
 The stars are watching, and sweet peace will reign
 Around the shadows of our marriage-bed.
Sleep on, sleep on : sweet is our rest at night :
And sweet to waken in the morning light.

III

THE steady toiler, whose whole life is sold

To daily work, does he not need repose ?

Ask him when slowly to his home he goes
At eventide, with spirits dull and cold.

His task well done, what further need has he,
Ere he retires in thankfulness, than this :

A frugal meal, a word of sympathy
From loving helpmate, and his children's kiss ?

So let him rest in peace his weary head,
An honest soldier in this world of strife ;
Forgive his simple-minded views of life :

He labours well, and earns his daily bread.

*Sleep on, sleep on : sweet is our rest at night :
And sweet to waken in the morning light.*

IV

CALM eventide of Life, sublimely grand !

When Time is ebbing fast, and each new day
May be the last ere we are call'd away
To take our journey to the distant land.

The old man watches at his garden gate
And sees across the hills the setting sun ;
His is that peace by labour nobly won :

Till his change come he patiently can wait.
The night-time closes round : his day is past :

He sinks to rest full of old memories dear,
Content to leave this world of shadows here
And reach with joy Eternity at last.

*Sleep on, sleep on : sweet is our rest at night :
And sweet to waken in the morning light.*

TO W. C. P., ON HIS MARRIAGE

A JEU D'ESPRIT, AFTER SPENSER

UP now, Melpomene, the mournfulst Muse of nine,
 Such cause of mourning never hadst afore,
 Up woful Thoughts, and up my ruful Rime,
 Matter of Mirth now shalt thou have no more :
 For gone he is that Mirth thee made of yore ;
 Willyum our love, alas ! is led
 Unto the marriage-bed.
 O bitter Curse !
 Let streaming tears be poured out in store,
 O careful Verse !

Brothers that by your books and solitude abide,
 Wail ye this woful Waste of Nature's Wark ;
 Wail we the Wight whose Presence was our Pride,
 Wail we the Wight whose Absence is our Cark,

To W. C. P., on his Marriage 93

His eyen are dimm'd with Woman's doings dark,
His ears are charm'd by talken light,
Now does he dwell in deadly Night.

O bitter Curse !

Break we our Pipes and Cups our woe to mark,
O careful Verse !

Why do we longer live (ah ! why live we so long ?)
Whose joyful days are all shut up in woe.
The merriest Wight our hopeful Band among
Has left us quite, and we alone y-go :
'The healthie 'sing-song' now we'll have no mo.
The 'goaks' that Willyum made we fain would praise,
But into weeping turn our wanton ways.

O bitter Curse !

Now is time to die : nay, time was long ago ;
O careful Verse !

But, maugre Fate and Love's malicious spight,
And Marriage-vows and fiery Woman's force,
He hath his ways y-broke that loved the Night
In which he ran the vicious youthes Course.

94 *To W. C. P., on his Marriage*

Why weep then, brothers, so without remorse?

Willyum, we'll thee no more lament ;

Thou art not gone, but into joy y-hent.

Joyful Reverse !

Cease now, my Muse, now cease thy Sorrow's source,

O joyful Verse !

Why wail we then? why weary we the Gods with Complaints

As if some Evil were to him betight?

He is a Husband now, praise be to Saints,

That whylom was a gay and naughty Wight,

He'll soon be 'Father' hight.

I see the happy Man, I see,

With Children twain on either knee.

O happy Nurse !

Might we all be like thee (O that we might !)

O joyful Verse !

Willyum is gone afore (whose turn shall be the next?)

There lives he with the cheerful Wife in bliss.

There drinks he Nectar with Ambrosia mixt

And Joys enjoys that single Men do miss.

To W. C. P., on his Marriage 95

The honour now of moral Men he is
That whylom was our Bande's Pride,
While he with Celibacie did abide.
Happy Reverse !
Cease now, my Song, my Woe now wasted is,
O joyful Verse !

'WHAT WENT YE OUT FOR TO SEE?'

Down the wet street
 I look from my window ;
 I see a crowd coming,
 What is it coming, that people all run there to meet ?

Now they come near,
 What noise from the people !
 The people all running !
 See now,—the policemen, the stretcher, and what the
 men bear.

Strapp'd on and bound
 And quiet, unconscious
 Of all that is passing,
 A woman all drunk and dishevell'd it is they have found.

'What went ye out for to see?' 97

Shoeless her feet,
Her head cover'd over,
Her dress torn and dirty,
And *this* is the sight that the people are running to
meet!

What do they think?
Whilst they rush and halloo,
And laugh as they follow,
Are their thoughts of the sin and the suffering begotten
by drink?

Avert not your eyes,
'Tis a sight full of sorrow!
It teaches a lesson—
All misery and sin we should pity, but never despise!

Chance put us in
This world with good favours
Of school and right teaching,
Our life might have been as this woman's—the victim
of gin!

98 *'What went ye out for to see?'*

Rich men and proud,

Fair women so thoughtless,

Look here, and remember

This same might have been your mother, hooted hence
by the crowd.

A LAMENT

WHERE art thou gone, sweet Spirit of Poesy?
Why hast thou left me solitary here
Amongst the rocks and shoals, when with thy help
O'er many a wave I battled? Even at first,
Long years ago, when hope and strong desire
Quickened my heart to joy with fluttering pride,
Didst thou not make me brave, and hold my soul
From sinking in the slough of youthful sins?
Didst thou not lead me forth to country fields,
And set the birds a-singing in the air,
And show me hedgerows where the violets grew?
Then when perforce I bound myself to toil
For gold and honour in the city's roar,
Didst thou not give me books to cheer me on
And make a noble purpose for my life?

So when I loved, thou madest my love so fair,
Like some sweet angel walking on the earth,
That when I claim'd her mine, it seem'd but right
My life should be divine and sanctified.

Thus have I struggled on, 'midst hope and fear
And strong desire to act a worthy part,
Till now my life seems fix'd and riveted
In worldly things, and duty fills the place
Within my heart which years ago brimm'd o'er
With fancies bred of poesy and books.

Ah ! give me back, sweet Muse, those idle thoughts,
Restore to me the power to see the world
Beneath my feet, and all my aims above ;
Give me but once again the eye to see,
The ear to hear, the simple heart to know,
The beauties of the fields, the trees, the clouds ;
Then would I be content to leave the world,
And in some leafy solitude to die.

*'TO ALL WHO LOVE THE LIGHT, THE
LIGHT HAS COME'*

THE opening light of day, in cool clear air,
And sky that pulsates with a crimson glow.
A rosebud eager all its charms to show,
Just breaking into bloom of passion rare.
The infant's smile, by fond eyes watch'd for long ;
Or maiden's blush when first her gentle heart
Is touch'd by fire of love, intense and strong.
The soul's resolve to bear the nobler part
And give to life a purer grander view.
The soften'd radiance, tender twinkling gleam
Of evening star that early sheds its beam.
The deathbed smile that kindles hopes anew
As the soul mounts towards her higher home.
'To all who love the light, the light has come.'

SONNET

OCCASIONED BY A PASSAGE IN A LETTER FROM
EMERSON TO CARLYLE¹

THE world is full of fever'd toil and strain ;
 ' No time ! no time ! ' is our continual cry ;
 We know the day comes soon when we must die :
 So restless, panting, work with might and main
 For pleasure, riches, power or renown.
 Each has his goal : each has his life to lead :
 'Tis well we aim not for too high a crown,
 Lest failure leave us like a broken reed.
 Our great ideals spurn'd, or left alone,
 Like fetter'd angels, doom'd to bondage fast,
 We look at them and sigh, until at last
 The evening darkens : day will soon be gone.
 But, far above, the stars gleam down and say :
 ' There's time enough : work slowly on thy way.'

¹ Concord, July 1, 1842. (*Correspondence of Carlyle and Emerson*, ii. 3.)

MIDDAY REST

I CLIMB'D the rocks in wind and sun and rain,
Until I gain'd the hill-top, hot and faint ;
And sat upon a stone with motto quaint,
'Rest and be thankful,' graven deep and plain.

Half of my journey past and left behind,
To greet the welcome breeze I turn me round,
And scan the sloping paths that downward wind
Which I must tread, ere home and peace be found.

Thankful I pause, my day of life half done ;
'Tis only for a moment, then again
In onward fight my soul must strive and strain
To end her task ere setting of the sun.

Adieu, dear resting-place, farewell, farewell !
Who can the dangers of the path foretell ?

Between Swanage and Studland.

PRINTED BY
SPOTTISWOODE AND CO., NEW-STREET SQUARE
LONDON

THE LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

12

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY
Los Angeles

This book is DUE on the last date stamped below.

Form L9-50m-7,'54 (5990)444

PR Gridley -
L728 Ivy leaves
G74i

FR
L728
G74i

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



AA 000 369 705 9

